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By JAMES W. EGAN

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By CLYDE ROBERT BULLA

HOW QUERIES SHOULD BE  
WRITTEN

ANNUAL HANDY MARKET LIST  
OF SYNDICATES

THE STUDENT WRITER

LESSON VIII—SUSPENSE AS A NARRATIVE DEVICE

SYNDICATE MARKETS — LOWERED MANUSCRIPT  
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NO. 5

## SYNDICATE MARKETS

The annual Handy Market List of Syndicates, in this issue, contains a large number of changes from last year's list. There appears to have been a rather heavy mortality among concerns in this field, and a number of newcomers are noted.

Readers should be cautioned that the syndicates—far from being easy markets, as seems to be frequently assumed—are very difficult. Established syndicates are extremely cautious about taking on new features. The amateur stands almost no chance with them—the professional can usually do better elsewhere. They usually have their hands full finding and maintaining outlets for their well-established syndicate features. A good many syndicates use only staff-prepared material—are never in the market for free-lance work. New companies may be more receptive, sometimes taking on promising features with the idea of forcing them into an already crowded market; but they rarely succeed in their promotion efforts. The author submitting work to the lesser syndicates should be prepared for months of delay, with a good chance of never being able to get his material back. These are familiar experiences in the field. There is no reason for attempting to gloss over the facts.

The syndicate, almost invariably, is not interested in single articles. Aside from the comparatively few that buy short-stories or serials, with very rigid requirements as to length or types, the syndicate is interested only in features that can be run continuously for a period of months or years—comic strips, daily columns, and the like. It is best to submit such offerings in the form of half a dozen or more samples, so that the continuity of the feature is apparent.

Unbusiness-like methods on the part of many syndicates evidently are matched by numerous authors who submit work to them, judging by comments attached to several of the questionnaires returned in this and former years to the A. & J. offices. "Tell writers that unless they enclose return postage, their manuscripts will be tossed into the waste basket" is the burden of the complaints. Why any writer in this supposedly enlightened age would injure his chances by neglecting this simple requirement is difficult to fathom.

One syndicate, in returning the questionnaire, wrote the scathing letter that follows. We publish it without giving the name of the company, because it voices a complaint which appears to be quite general. The letter:

If you will delete our name from your syndicate list we will be more than pleased. We are forced to take this attitude because none of the material submitted to

us as a result of this listing meets our requirements. Most of it consists of second-hand, second-rate rejects. Much of it is unaccompanied by sufficient postage for either arrival or return. In other words, we're sick of all of it. Why, when syndicates sell to circulations that exceed those of any other publication, would-be writers seem to think they are nothing more than last-resort garbage cans for their rejected literary offerings, we don't know. But we are certain that we are not alone in this attitude.

The syndicate list is published as an annual feature in *THE ANNUAL & JOURNALIST* because the field does offer some opportunities for writers who are peculiarly qualified. An outstanding feature, promoted by a substantial syndicate, undoubtedly can make its originator a good income. But it must again be reiterated that the syndicates are difficult, not easy markets. They offer no openings for the inexperienced.

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## LOWERED MANUSCRIPT EXPRESS RATES BENEFIT AUTHORS

On April 15th, a new schedule of express rates went into effect, under which writers may now enjoy a saving. Even under the former express rate, it was considerably less expensive to ship a bulky manuscript by Railway Express than by first-class mail. A one-pound manuscript could be shipped from Denver to New York, for example, for 42 cents, under the old rates. Under the new rate, one pound may be shipped from Denver to New York for 25 cents, and is insured up to \$50.00. The first-class postage rate would be 48 cents without insurance. On heavier manuscripts the saving is very much greater.

The new rates are worked out on a "scale number" basis. Writers may ascertain the rates applicable to their localities by inquiring at the local offices of the Railway Express Agency. The minimum charge from any point is 25 cents. This may cover a manuscript weighing from two pounds up to six, within short distances. It covers one pound for distances as far as from Denver to New York. West of the Rockies, and for equivalent distances, the one-pound rate may be 30 cents. This is the maximum for one-pound packages. Two pounds from practically any point in the United States to another will come to not more than 35 cents. On long hauls, additional pounds will add from 5 to 10 cents each.

Under the present 25 cent minimum there is a sav-



"Here! Take my wife next!"

ing to the author in sending any manuscript weighing 9 ounces or over by express rather than first-class mail. The saving is progressively greater for heavier packages.

There are several advantages to manuscript submission by Railway Express. The manuscript is insured for values up to \$50.00 under the minimum rate. It will be called for as well as delivered. A receipt is given to the shipper and obtained from the consignee, so that a question concerning delivery can always be settled by the records. And, of course, the writer can instruct that the manuscript be returned if unavailable by express collect, at the same rate—thus doing away with the necessity of enclosing return postage.

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## WRITERS' CONFERENCES

At the summer season approaches, the average writer, like everybody else, begins to yearn for a vacation. He begins to dream of green valleys and tree-clad hills, filled with the music of singing birds and trickling streams; he feels the urge to get away from the monotonous routine of his everyday life, and to seek for inspiration and recreation somewhere in the arms of Old Mother Nature.

For the writer who wishes to combine his vacation with a program of constructive literary work, no Elysian Field is more attractive than the several writers' colonies and conferences held each summer in various parts of the United States. The Bread Loaf Conference in the Green Mountains of Vermont, the Olivet Conference near Battle Creek, Michigan, and the Rocky Mountain Conference in Boulder, Colorado, to mention a few of the more notable ones.

From July 24 to August 11, the University of Colorado, in Boulder, will be host to the tenth annual Writers' Conference in the Rocky Mountains. This conference, which has gained widespread recognition from writers throughout the country, is headed by Dr. Edward Davison. Among the distinguished lecturers who will appear there are Robert Morss Lovett, Louis Bromfield, and Carl Van Doren. The group leaders and advisers include Edward Davison in the poetry division; Burgess Johnson, prose; Douglas Bemont, the short-story; Eric Knight, the novel; Norman Corwin, radio, and Albert Maltz, playwriting.

This summer, also in Colorado, another group of writers will gather, through the month of July, at a mountain resort in the North St. Vrain Canyon, just outside Rocky Mountain National Park. In the atmosphere of a picturesque summer playground, this Summer colony for Writers has been organized to give its members a maximum of vacation privileges along with an intensive program of personal help on the practical phases of professional writing. The emphasis is to be put on making manuscripts salable in the national magazine market. It will be under the direction of Frank Clay Cross, well known for his numerous magazine articles, and the staff will include such outstanding fiction writers, play writers and poets as Lenora Mattingly Weber, Forbes Parkhill, William M. John, Mary Coyle Chase and Helen Howland Prommel.

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## BOOKS FOR WRITERS

**WRITE THAT PLAY**, by Kenneth Thorpe Rose. Funk & Wagnalls, \$3.00.

Professor Rose ten years ago created the highly successful courses in playwriting at the University of Michigan which he still conducts. Plays by his students have received nationwide recognition in production in professional and amateur stages and on the air. "Write That Play" presents a concentrated experience in writing plays and teaching. It progresses through the one-act play to the long play, offering detailed analyses and specific suggestions relat-

ing to all problems of dramatic technique. Typical chapter titles: "What a Play Is," "Finding Dramatic Material," "Analysis of a Great Play," "Characterization," "Dialogue." The section entitled "A Note on What To Do With a Play After It Is Written" gives some idea of the marketing possibilities.

**PREPARING THE MANUSCRIPT**, by Udia G. Olsen. The Writer, Inc., Boston. \$1.00.

This volume gives the information which new writers frequently seek, and which is somewhat difficult to find in many text-books and writers' magazines, because it is considered elementary. The arrangement of the manuscript, kind of paper to use, and similar details are covered in the opening chapter. The balance of the book is occupied with information on such topics as Checking and Correcting, Rules of grammar, spelling and punctuation; Submitting for Publication, Proofreading, Making an Index; Authors' Rights, Copyright, and Permissions.

**THE MACMILLAN HANDBOOK OF ENGLISH**, by John M. Kierzek. The Macmillan Company. \$1.25.

A useful textbook designed for use in college courses in English composition. The author is professor of English at Oregon State College. The first part of the book is designed to give the helpful, common-sense advice about writing that a beginner needs. This section is followed by chapters on grammar, the building of good sentences, paragraph structure, etc. The second part of the book constitutes the "handbook" part. It is organized under seventy-seven rules, including a useful glossary of faulty expressions.

**IF YOU SHOULD WANT TO WRITE**, by Alice Ross Colver. Dodd, Mead & Company. \$1.50.

This is frankly sub-titled, "A Handbook for Beginning Authors." The aspirant will find here usable advice on such fundamental points as choice of story material, approach to a subject, practice of writing, preparation of manuscripts, and markets. The market list, however, excludes the leading standard magazines and the great pulp field—apparently on the theory that these are too difficult for the beginning writer. Playwriting, radio and screen writing are briefly touched upon.

**EDITING THE SMALL CITY DAILY**, by Robert M. Neal. M.A. Prentice-Hall, Inc. \$3.35.

This substantial volume (436 pages) constitutes a liberal course in journalism. It deals especially with the problems of desk work in the various departments of the smaller daily newspaper, and is profusely illustrated with examples of headline writing, make-up, the editorial page, proofreading, and in fact all the details of newspaper practice. The author is assistant professor of journalism at the University of Wisconsin, and onetime assistant news editor of the Springfield *Republican*.

**NEW FIELDS FOR THE WRITER**, edited by Stephen Moore. National Library Press, New York. \$1.50.

The new fields covered are Television, Radio, Film, and Drama. The method of covering them consists of giving sample television, radio, motion-picture, and play scripts, with brief forewords outlining the essential requirements. It is expected that the student will gather the terminology and technical methods of each field by studying the examples.

**A PLEA AND A PLAY**, by Welford Beaton. The Hollywood Spectator. \$1.00.

The plea in this little book is for "less dialogue in screen productions as the only method of reviving film box offices before they are talked to death." It is followed by a demonstration in the form of screenplay outline containing only 162 speeches instead of the usual 1500 to 2500.



# THE AUTHOR & JOURNALIST

*May, 1939*

## WHITE MAGIC MAKES BLACK PRINT

... By **RICHARD TOOKER**



Richard Tooker

THE cleverest plotter is he who can make impossible or improbable situations sound logical and plausible. In other words, there is more to plotting than mere listing of major complications. If one cannot sell himself first, and then the reader, on imaginative complications far

stranger than real life, he had best divert his efforts to some form of fact writing.

I am reminded of a situation in one of a popular series of detective stories. The detective runs down his clues to a point where he is certain that evidence of a murder lies at the bottom of a lake. What does Mr. Detective do, then, but don a diving suit (oxygen tanked) and walk across the lake bottom, to find the severed legs of a body weighed down by scrap iron tied to the ankles. It was a fair-sized lake, and the fact that the detective had to walk clear across it indicates how uncertain he was of the approximate spot where the corpse members had been sunk.

We have all heard of divers working for hours and days to bring up something from a lake bottom, but we never heard of a detective doing it himself with a promptness that implies he had the sixth sense of a shark. Nevertheless,

it was an absorbing story. I never paused to consider the impossibilities until I had read and enjoyed it. If I hadn't been in a habit of analyzing fiction, I'd never have discovered that I had been sold on so patent a whopper.

The above is an extreme case, for the simple reason that few writers can summon the skill to present such an illusion convincingly. But the point is that the author of this detective series is one of our ace writers; he gets praise in plenty from the fans. And he deserves it because he produces the real article in fiction—something that can't happen in real life, yet for the brief time that one reads him, he makes us believe that it could happen.

Just what is this white magic of fiction technique that makes good black print? Can it be explained, and if so, what are the essentials of the trick?

First, the fiction writer must be absolutely sold on his material. It is difficult or impossible to write a good story if we ourselves do not believe in it. However, this sincerity of the good writer does not necessarily imply that he would vigorously defend his plots as actually possible or probable in real life. The purpose of fiction writing is to create an illusion that will entertain, and sincere writing, at least for thrillers, seldom goes farther than the sincerity of the writer to make his reader believe the impossible.

Second, we will note in most good fiction, especially detective fiction, that many impossible aspects of a situation are cleverly concealed or detoured adroitly. It is always best, of course, that the writer be convinced of the veracity of his visualized illusions. But there

Mr. Tooker has written for numerous pulp magazines, particularly the science-fiction periodicals, and has frequently appeared in *Ken*, *Esquire*, and other exacting magazines. One of his several published books is being translated into the French.

are times when one must deliberately juggle facts and logic to prevent destroying an otherwise thrilling illusion. Most writers have experienced this danger point in fiction, when, for an instant, they are conscious of the utter improbability of the fabric they are weaving. At this critical stage of creation, in all sincerity, one must resort to tricky logic, artfully concealing or distorting the improbable factors that threaten to destroy the illusion. For fiction is the art of masterful fabrication to a good and just purpose, amusing people and indirectly instructing them.

Most of us have been embarrassed at some time or other by a speaker, or someone relating an anecdote, who begins to stammer and fumble, ending desperately with, "well, you see this is only a story!" The same faint-heartedness in attack ruins countless fiction stories. Not so obviously, however. The flaw is manifest in muddled writing, obscurity, in cramped, artificial statement. The writer has slipped, has revealed his clanking machinery behind the scenes, and the illusion is lost in implausibility.

But do not make the mistake of concluding that you will not err in this, since you will always write plots that really could happen. This is another common weakness of the novice; he conceives a "safe" plot and the result is a commonplace, dull story, eclipsed or equalled by fact stories. Fiction should be, and at its best is, stranger than fact. If it were not, there would be no demand for fiction. Our plots must be whoppers that sound real, at least on casual reading.

When an editor returns a detective story with the criticism that the motivation for the murders is implausible he usually means that in striving for something new and novel, the writer has distorted human psychology, has

attempted to depict homicide without sufficient provocation. But he may also mean that the writer has let slip his own doubt that murder could be committed for such reasons. Almost anything can be done in fiction if the writer is convinced of it.

In modern technique it isn't necessary to explain why a thing is so if we can convince the reader it is so in the telling. Most of the bizarre situations now popular in thrill fiction could not be told convincingly if the writer attempted to explain in detail. Thus, if we paint a vivid, exciting, skilfully motivated picture of a bull jumping through a bay window and goring his master in the front room, we have a promising idea for modern melodrama. We have created something in fancy that simply doesn't happen in real life. But the mad bull will never go through the window in salable form if we are the least bit faint-hearted in transcribing such a whopper. In the best fiction the writer has convinced himself utterly; he is first to be hypnotized by his thrilling illusions. When we can't sell ourselves on an idea, we have attempted something that is too much for us. Yet, situations must be bizarre in crime fiction, and if we find too many bright ideas unavailable, the wise move is to devote our time to some other form of fiction or to fact writing.

Two brief examples of handling an impossible situation, exaggerated for illustrative purposes, may be helpful. One example is implausible, the other plausible, yet both are identically the same situation:

(1) "You killed Gil Walton, Bernhardt," said Detective Blake. "You used a sash weight. You threw it down the skylight as Walton passed under it on the way to his studio. Even a baseball pitcher like you couldn't hit a man that way fatally once in a thousand times, but you did it this time, and you'll burn for it!"

(2) "You killed Gil Walton, Bernhardt. You threw that sash weight down the skylight as he passed under it on the way to his studio. You crushed his skull with that sash weight as surely as you used to cut the corners of the home plate as a pitcher in the bush leagues. It was easy enough for you—as easy as it will be to sit you in the hot seat for it!"

Need I say which is plausible and which implausible? In the second handling it was easy for Bernhardt to kill Walton in this manner; in the first it was impossible, a freak accident, happening fortuitously (in a sense) for the murderer's purpose. Yet both deal with the same means of killing a man fictionally.

Quite often, amateur writers are sidetracked in a good story by a misconception of what sincerity is in fiction writing. They are aware of some highly improbable factors in their material, and they digress to explain how this could happen under such-and-such circumstances.



"You mean the rejection slip didn't get in by mistake?"

They are only defeating the purposes of fiction in this hair-splitting honesty. If Gil Walton is killed by a sash weight thrown down a skylight, say so—say it was easy because the murderer was a baseball pitcher, and let it go at that. Not one reader in a thousand will pause to question you. In fact, he will curse you if you break his illusion by arguing about it, and attracting his attention to all the rabbits hidden behind the hat.

Good detective stories, and other forms as well, to a large extent, are illusions achieved by word jugglery. They are based on tricks of word magic exactly as the stage magician achieves illusions by tricks. Readers find all sorts of possible murders in fact detective stories and daily newspapers. When they turn to fiction they expect amazing, astounding complications of fact fragments. They are disappointed, if not disgusted, when they behold the writer-magician earnestly revealing all the mirrors and trap doors that go to make up his act.

During a considerable number of years of reading manuscripts from everywhere as both editor and critic, I have been puzzled no little by a common delusion of amateur writers. It is that newspaper stories are a golden mine of story germs. Rarely to never is this true. Almost every newspaper crime story is catalogued as stock in the creative equipment of the finished detective story writer. He gleans many valuable "bits of business" from newspapers, but rarely a story germ. His plots are imaginative networks of fact fragments from everywhere.

To begin with, newspaper stories which are actually unusual are almost invariably freak coincidences, things that occur perhaps once in a thousand years. And convincing fiction cannot be built on ideas that are out-and-out freaks of nature. But most newspaper crime stories are not freakish; they are routine crimes that have happened innumerable times and will continue to happen. For that reason, they are not fiction material, since they aren't "stranger than fact."

The eager novice reads an item about a torso found in a river, the limbs and head hacked off. Immediately he rushes to his notebook. What a mystery yarn that will make! Yet, in analysis, that story germ is nothing more than a stock dismemberment murder. From one's own ingenuity must come the novel situation, and it is just as well to forget the newspaper item, for if one doesn't know the basic methods of murder he should not attempt detective fiction.

Let the legless, headless torso be found hanging from a church steeple some foggy morning, as it rarely, if ever, would be found in the newspaper story. With that story germ from



"Twas the night before Christmas and . . ."

the imagination, combining the incongruous, we can build a story that may interest a jaded crime-story public.

A good plot is almost invariably implausible or impossible. Consider that magnificent romance by Rider Haggard, the immortal "She." A woman who lived two thousand years! Did Haggard waste any words attempting to convince the reader that a woman actually lived this long? He did not. He painted the picture, an engrossing one, and his purpose was achieved—to write a gripping story stranger than fact.

The finishing touch of master plotting comes when the writer fully appreciates the importance of glossing over and evading negative issues. Not with tongue in cheek, but with the sincere determination to entertain himself and others. It is a simple trick to attract the reader's attention to a probable and thrilling factor at the moment when an impossible factor is dangerously imminent. One critic called it "treading the hair-line of improbability without falling off." Most writers fail first of all in convincing themselves that the impossible could happen. Their own negative reaction results in a weak and halting story. The sincere writer is sincere in the same way that a good stage magician sells his skill to the audience. No one must ever guess how it is done.

When that story is returned with the notation "unconvincing" or "implausible," don't proceed to take all the novelty out of it and substitute something commonplace. Who cares whether the commonplace is convincing or not? Study the presentation carefully for spots where your own conviction wavers, where your detective may be giving it all away by elaborating on the negative, coincidental factors. Good fiction is the art of hypnotizing first oneself and then the reader to believe that black is white; it is done by suggestion, the white magic of the mind that makes black print worth more than the paper it appears on.

# CREATIVE WRITING AND WPA

. . . By **JAMES W. EGAN**

*Former Washington State Director, Federal Writers' Project*



James W. Egan

WHAT has the WPA Federal Writers' Project done, since its inception in 1935, to encourage or rehabilitate the creative writer?

Writing acquaintances have been asking me this question, knowing that I spent more than two years as Washington State director of the

Federal Writers' Project before voluntarily resigning late in the summer of 1938.

A bluntly truthful answer is that this nationwide project has done very little for the creative writer in the past three and a half years. Nor, under the present set-up, is it likely to do anything helpful in the future.

One of the reasons I left the FWP was due to its failure to offer a real program for the creative worker. After nearly 25 years of earning a living as a free-lance fiction writer, I accepted a state directorship at the urging of the Authors' League of America, which hoped the "Writers' Project" would turn out to be something it did not turn out to be. I resigned when I came to realize that the longer I remained, the less proficient I was becoming as an expressive writer. Often I have regretted ever taking the post at all.

The principal work of the Federal Writers' Project has been the compilation of state and local guidebooks—the "American Guide Series." Many states have not yet completed their guides, or succeeded in coaxing out private capital to get them published. When the guidebooks are out of the way, the project is supposed to get at the dreary job of doing state encyclopedias.

Research work, rather than writing, is emphasized in compiling these guidebooks. The writing is mainly dull factual reporting. In the beginning a degree of colorful—but always factual—writing was permitted; but, as the task prolonged, more and more of it was

chopped out by the editorial staff centralized in Washington, D. C. (This staff has the last word on all copy.) Space is at a premium, so good descriptive writing is sacrificed in order not to miss this muddy branch road or that architectural nonentity, (R)—Adm. by appt. only.

The chief trouble with assembling guidebooks and such, however—with or without colorful writing—is that the work is of dubious value in rehabilitating the individual worker. What is termed a "Writers' Project" is in reality a research project. The task does practically nothing to improve, or even maintain, the skill of the creative writer.

To my mind here is a fundamental weakness of the Federal writing program. The individual worker becomes an anonymous unit in a mass production scheme. He cannot create; he merely reports and recasts. And his reporting must fall within the confines of a very rigid formula. You should read the multitude of instructions governing preparation of Guide copy!

Other major divisions of the Federal Arts set-up place less handicap upon the creative artist, who may feel the matter of self-expression as important as drawing relief wages.

The Federal Theatre engages actors to do what they once did in the commercial theatre—to act. Indeed, this project has gone beyond the old forms of stage entertainment and created new. It has expanded and enlivened the drama, developed talent for private industry.

In the Federal Art Project workers may create with pencil, crayon or brush. Federal musicians express themselves according to their talents, whether it be for symphonic or swing music.

Yet writers, in whom the creative fires should perhaps burn brightest, are restricted to a routine of seldom inspiring research. Most of the genuine writers who were able to comply with or beat the relief regulations to get on the FWP were of creative bent. Either they had sold fiction, or hoped to sell it some day. But they discovered little enough in the program to further their aims.

One or two half-hearted attempts have been made to recognize the presence of creative writers. From time to time members of my staff were asked to submit stories, essays, and poems for a national magazine (which never



materialized), these contributions to be penned in "offtime." A couple of collections were published under the same title: "American Stuff." Most of this "stuff" was commercially unsalable—in fact, the commercial type of story was fired back to the author by those editorial geniuses in Washington, D. C. It had to be "literature."

From the outset I protested the lack of a definite program for the creative writer. A program that would be an integral part of the work, not an "offtime task." I felt that real writers should be set at work to fit their abilities, strengthen their skills, and spur their initiative—work which ultimately might return them to the ranks of private wage-earners.

Away back in 1936 a smart young non-relief assistant I had—he left me later to take a good newspaper job—suggested that we rent a linotype machine and press a few days a month, buy some paper and supplies, hire a relief printer and pressman, and get out a magazine to be distributed statewide to WPA workers, either free or at nominal cost. Both fact and fiction could have been printed. But the national office couldn't see it, even though the cost would have been infinitesimal compared to the service we could have rendered to our writers and—maybe—readers.

Of course, numerous persons employed on

the Federal Writers' Project—and elsewhere in WPA—have no keen desire to get back into private industry. But there are others who seek something better from life than artificial labor, who still believe America will reward hard, creative effort.

The idea of placing cultural activities under WPA control was somewhat unsound to begin with. Any program trying to combine charitable handouts with productive toil—and with mercenary politicians constantly interfering—is apt to be inefficient and disastrous to morale.

Because of WPA's restrictions and glaring weaknesses, there has been some agitation in the past two years to establish a so-called Federal Fine Arts Bureau and place writers, musicians, actors and artists in a permanent department subsidized by government funds.

While this could be a marked improvement over the present set-up, I am not wholly sold on it, although I know a number of real writers who are. I fear the bureau would be subject to the same old political manipulation. Likewise, I am not too sure that any government, benevolent or despotic, totalitarian or democratic, can subsidize writers without destroying a very precious possession: Freedom of expression as an individual. That's a lot to give up for a government paycheck.

## AN EDITOR SUGGESTS HOW QUERIES SHOULD BE WRITTEN

The *Los Angeles Times Sunday Magazine* recently inaugurated a new policy. We quote from the letter in which this policy is announced, not only because it acquaints contributors with that policy, but because it indicates how a good query letter should be phrased. The letter, addressed to contributors in general, states:

We are asking you not to submit voluntarily any more completed manuscripts to *The Magazine*. This definitely does not mean that the market is closed to free-lance writers.

Despite the fact that we eliminated fiction from *The Magazine* more than a year ago, we have been handling approximately 400 manuscripts weekly. Each one of these represents hours of effort and expense on the part of the writer, and so few of you seem to realize what the odds are against you, even though those odds be computed on the law of averages.

We want to eliminate the heartbreak and discouragement that goes with rejection as much as we possibly can. From now on, what buying we do for *The Magazine*, we want to do solely on a query basis.

It will take you five minutes to write a 100-word query. It will take the editors about two minutes to determine the value of your query to our market.

If you have a story idea that intrigues us, you will know it as soon as a return mail can reach you, and it will be time enough then to show us a manuscript or to get to work to turn one out. Incidentally, there

is a sample attached which shows you just how we like to see these queries.

Sincerely,

R. P. WHITE,  
Editor *Sunday Magazine*.

Following is the suggested form of query letter:

Sir:

Do any of the following story ideas appeal to you for *The Sunday Magazine*?

(1) A story possibly entitled: "CAN LAUGHTER DIE?"

This thought occurs to me from reading press interviews with Dorothy Parker on her return from war-torn Spain. "I have given up the cause of laughter," she sobbed.

Isn't this a timely excuse to point out, by reviewing some of the immortal quips of great American wits, that laughter can never die in America, that it is the one country left in the world where laughter remains free and unrestrained, and that as a nation, we need not fear, so long as we can laugh?

(2) A story possibly entitled: "ART FROM MUDDY FINGERS."

There is a woman named Ruth Faison Shaw, an American school teacher now in Los Angeles, who is lecturing throughout the country to educators, psychiatrists and artists on experiments she has conducted with children. She is teaching them to express themselves through the most natural medium—their fingers.

She has numerous stories illustrating the effect on personality of even tiny tots, who have learned the art of finger painting. They will express in their work problems they do not recognize as such in their lives. One of her most thrilling experiences occurred in her work with delinquent boys in the Los Angeles County Juvenile Hall. It was hard to get the boys away from their painting at meal time.

Excellent photographic illustrations are available.

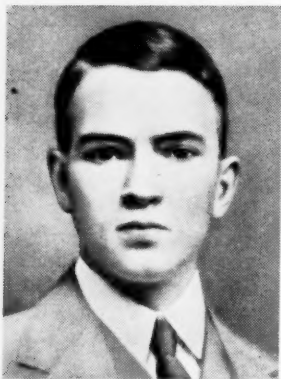
(3) A personality sketch on Konrad Bercovici, the Roumanian biographer and novelist now visiting in Los Angeles. I can reach him on a personal basis through mutual friends who I know will entertain him. I am thoroughly familiar with his literary work, and I think that studied from a not too critical viewpoint, he would make a very interesting character sketch for the *Magazine*.

Yours very truly,

## HAVE YOU ADJECTIVE-ITIS?

... By CLYDE ROBERT BULLA

Mr. Bulla is a frequent contributor to the romantic magazines. He wrote "The New Pulp Love Story" for our April, 1938 issue.



Clyde Robert Bulla

ADJECTIVE-itis is a disease affecting most beginning writers—and a good many who aren't beginners. When an editor tells you your story is over-written, he may mean that you have dragged in too many scenes and details having no real bearing on your plot. Then, again, he may

mean you have piled on so many adjectives that a clear-cut effect is lost. Like this:

The slender, black-browed, hazel-eyed girl lacked the perfection of features to be described as actually beautiful, but she glowed as with a soft inner light. When she came out of the great, towering office building she wore a trim, stylish suit of an odd shade of brown and yellow tweed. There was a gay little smile on her bright lips, as if she had never been sad in all her twenty-three years.

Now let's see how Clara Wallace Overton describes a similar heroine in the current *Pictorial Review*:

She wasn't beautiful, but her face had a pattern and a dark glowing quality that made people look at her and remember her. They remembered her definitely—a slim, black-haired girl with bright hazel eyes. She looked well in strong, clear colors. Now she was wearing a tweed Chesterfield coat and a sport hat of the same mixture. Somberness would never become her. Nor sadness.

Descriptive adjectives, yes, but notice how the author has avoided piling them on. Notice, too, the trick of a sentence using several adjectives balanced by a sentence with no adjectives at all.

Or perhaps you're writing action stories. Take this examples:

Two piebald horses ran hell-for-leather down through the narrow, aspen-choked canyon, their riders bent low in the saddles. The wind sang in

their ears like a thousand screaming devils and the mad thunder of the horses' hoofs filled the echoing canyon walls.

"Faster!" cried Neil, and at that moment his mount shied and reared with a violent, twisting motion that nearly sent him out of the saddle. He righted himself and an icy coldness filled his veins. There in the path ahead stood a dark, menacing figure—the man with the dirty, livid scar curving down across his left cheek.

Now compare it with this:

Two horses streaked down through the canyon, their riders crouched in the saddles. Wind screamed past them. Canyon walls flung back the thunder of hoof-beats.

"Faster!" cried Neil, and then his mount shied with a motion that nearly unseated him. He righted himself. His blood turned to ice. There ahead stood a man. The man with the scarred face.

Which scene is the clearer and faster moving?

Make your verbs work for you. If you have the habit of over-describing, I've a suggestion for you. Write a short-story—just one—omitting all descriptive adjectives. That's pretty drastic, I know, but afterward you'll have a better understanding of what can be accomplished by letting your characters describe themselves through their speech and action. After you've finished your story, go through it and supply adjectives only where you consider them necessary for smoothness and clarity.

There's adverbitis, as well. Too many "quicklys" and "brieflys" and "slowlys" strewn across the page.

But don't misunderstand me. Adjectives and adverbs are valuable tools—in their places. Your heroine may be small and blonde and husky-voiced and eager, but don't try to tell the reader so in one indigestible sentence. Picture her, if you like, as small and blonde, then let her speak in her husky voice—let her eagerness be shown in what she says or her manner of speaking.

If you're inclined to overwriting, try disciplining yourself to fewer adjectives and adverbs, fewer superlatives. Not only will it improve your style, but harassed editors will bless you for it.

## THE AUTHOR &amp; JOURNALIST'S ANNUAL HANDY MARKET LIST OF

## SYNDICATES

MAY, 1939

Information presented below has been obtained by querying the various syndicates in detail as to their requirements. Many syndicates are supplied by staff writers or other regular sources; these ordinarily cannot be considered as markets. Other syndicates will consider submitted free-lance material. The preference is for features in series; however, spot news, photos, feature articles, short-stories, and serials may be sold individually to syndicates open to such material. The method of remuneration is indicated as far as available. Some material is purchased outright; more often the arrangement is on a basis of royalty or percentage. Occasional syndicates are dilatory and unreliable in handling submissions. The Author & Journalist, of course, can assume no responsibility for the concerns here listed. Contributors are advised to send query or preliminary letter describing material to be offered, before submitting manuscripts or art.

Be sure to enclose return postage or (preferably) stamped envelopes.

**Acme News Pictures, Inc.**, 220 E. 42nd St., New York. (Affiliated with Scripps-Howard Newspapers.) Considers news pictures from free-lances. \$3 up, Acc.

**Adams (George Matthew) Service**, 444 Madison Ave., New York. Syndicates all types of daily and continuing features; cartoons, comic strips; buys first and all rights to 30-chapter serials. Miss Jessie Sleight. Outright purchase or 50-50 royalties.

**Alden (John M.) Features Syndicate**, P. O. Box 1612, Hollywood, Calif. Columns, serials and short-stories (first rights) with Hollywood background; feature articles, news features and pictures; cartoons. Percentage basis. Berne Abbott.

**American News Features, Inc.**, 420 Lexington Ave., New York. Comic strips, jokes, sport material, feature articles, first rights to short-stories, second rights to serials. Percentage basis.

**Apex Newphotos**, 602 Flatiron Bldg., Ft. Worth, Tex. All material obtained from regular sources.

**Associated Editors**, 1420 New York Ave., N.W., Washington, D. C. Weekly boys and girls' page; articles up to 800 words or short series up to 400 words each on subjects of interest to young people; novel puzzles, tricks, magic, how-to-do, how-to-make, etc. W. Boyce Morgan. ¼ cent a word, month preceding publication. (Submit at least 4 months before publication date.)

**Associated Features Syndicate**, Times Bldg., New York. Considers comic strips, cartoons, feature articles. Royalties, Robert W. Farrell.

**Associated Newspapers**, 247 W. 43d St., New York. (Affiliated with North Am. Newspaper Alliance, Bell Syndicate, and Consolidated News Features.) Not in market for free-lance material.

**Associated Press Feature Service**, 50 Rockefeller Plaza, New York. Staff and regular sources. Considers only free-lance novels of romance, adventure, mystery, American backgrounds, clean, fast-moving action, 50,000 words up. Newspaper rights purchased outright, payment on acceptance. M. J. Wing, Ed.

**Atlantic & Pacific Feature Syndicate**, 624 N. Juanita, Hollywood, Calif. (Affiliated with British Empire News Service and Feature Syndicate, World Wide News Service, Radio News Bureau of America, and Motion Picture Features Syndicate.) Feature columns on health, radio, motion pictures, books, sports, music, household subjects, candid shots of city life, etc. Percentage basis, rates by arrangement. Jack Parker, Mng. Ed.

**Authenticated News**, Times Bldg., New York. (Affiliated with Swiftnews.) Rotogravure feature pages only. Considers exclusive, up-to-date photos, news pictures. Outright purchase, varying rates. Stephen K. Swift.

**Authenticated News Service**, P. O. Box 326, Hollywood, Calif. Material on Hollywood stars, theatres and radio, from regular sources only. Vance Chandler.

**Bartlett Service**, 637 Pine St., Boulder, Colo. Business features and news, all retail and service trades. Has good openings for exclusive correspondents in several large cities west of Mississippi. Applicant requested to submit samples of work. Percentage basis. M. A. Bartlett, Mng. Ed.

**Bell Syndicate, Inc.**, 247 W. 43d St., New York. (Affiliated with Consolidated News Features, Associated Newspapers, North Am. Newspaper Alliance.) Chiefly regular sources. Considers second serial rights to short-stories, 5000 words. Royalties, 50%. Kathleen Caesar, editor.

**Better Features**, Box 367, Middletown, Ohio. Educational and inspirational material from regular sources. Not in the market.

**Blue Ribbon Features Syndicate**, 246 Fifth Ave., New York. Considers short articles on political economy, health, psychology, success talks, etc. Submit samples. 50-50 split over expenses. Hudson De Priest.

**Bond-Barclay Syndicate**, 3160 Kensington Ave., Philadelphia. Woman's page features, staff written.

**Bressler Editorial Cartoons**, Times Bldg., New York. Daily editorial cartoons, usually staff prepared; buys occasionally from free-lances. Payment on acceptance according to quality.

**British Empire Feature Syndicate** (also **British Empire News Photos**), 624 N. Juanita Ave., Hollywood, Calif. (Affiliated with Atlantic & Pacific Feature Syndicate.) Feature columns, short-stories, 200 words, jokes, feature articles, news features, photos of screen stars, candid photos of famous persons, street scenes of interest, etc., from over the world. Outright purchase on publication, varying rates; photos \$2 to \$5. Jack Parker, Mng. Ed.

**Burba Service**, Box 1046, Dayton, O. Does not consider free-lance material.

**Calvin's Newspaper Service**, 143 W. 125th St., New York. News mats, feature articles, from regular sources. No free-lance material. Floyd J. Calvin, editor.

**Casey (Elizabeth) Cooking & Home Making Schools**, 2096 Grand Ave., St. Paul, Minn. All material staff prepared.

**Central Feature News Service**, Times Bldg., New York. Buys exclusive news and human-interest, scientific pictures and illustrated features; inventions, discoveries, oddities. Outright purchase, 30 days.

**Central Press Association**, 1435 E. 12th St., Cleveland, O. Spot news pictures; feature pictures; brief news feature stories with art; first rights to serials. Outright purchase.

**Central Press Canadian**, 80 King St., Toronto, Ont., Canada. News and sport pictures and stories chiefly from regular sources. Pays \$1.50 per photo, on acceptance. R. B. Collett.

**Chapman, Wm. Gerard**, 100 W. Monroe St., Chicago, Ill. Fiction by established writers—query first.

**Joe Mitchell Chapple, Inc.**, 900 Statler Bldg., Boston, Mass. Brief sketches of people, interesting, odd, unique, obtained from regular sources.

**Chicago Daily News**, The, Chicago, Ill. All material obtained from free-lance writers. Considers 1000-word short-stories, O. Henry type; 25,000-word serials. Payment on acceptance, \$5 to \$25 for shorts, \$75 to \$500 for serials. John Patrick Lally, fiction editor.

**Chicago Journal of Commerce**, 12 E. Grand Ave., Chicago. Financial and economic charts principally from regular sources. W. L. Ayers.

**Chicago Tribune-New York News Syndicate**, 220 E. 42nd St., New York. General features. Buys first rights to serials, short-stories (Blue Ribbon Fiction); feature articles, news features, scientific material, columns, cartoons, comic strips. Outright purchase, payment on acceptance.

**Collyer's News Bureau**, 300 W. Adams St., Chicago. Considers sports features, photos. \$5 a column, Acc. J. S. Klein.

**Columbia Syndicate**, 570 7th Ave., New York. Feature articles, cartoons, columns, comic strips. 50-50 percentage basis.

**Consolidated Information Service**, 602 W. 190th St., New York. Buys only from staff writers.

**Consolidated News Features, Inc.**, 247 W. 43d St., New York. (Affiliated with North American Newspaper Alliance, Associated Newspapers, Bell Syndicate.) Feature articles, 6 or more in series, news features, columns, cartoons, comic strips. No news pictures or fiction. Horace Epes.

**Consolidated News Service**, 586 Central Ave., East Orange, N. J. All material staff prepared.

**Continental Feature Syndicate**, P. O. Box 326, Hollywood, Calif. Astrology and kindred subjects, chiefly from regular sources. Query first. Royalties, 50%. Easton West.

**Courier-Journal Syndicate**, The, Times Bldg., Louisville, Ky. Will consider first rights to serials and short-stories, outstanding feature articles, cartoons, news features, columns, comic strips, new types of features. Usually percentage basis. Carlile Crutcher. (MSS. also considered for Carlile Crutcher Synd.)

**Court and Commercial Newspaper Syndicate**, 534 Sycamore St., Cincinnati, Ohio. Legal and business news features, photos, from regular and free-lance sources. Space rates, Pub.

**C-P Syndicate**, 714 M. & M. Bldg., Houston, Tex. Daily and weekly features, cartoons, comic strips, food articles, mostly staff created. Some purchased on percentage basis.

**Crutcher (Carlile) Syndicate**, 300 W. Liberty St., Louisville, Ky. Affiliated with Courier Journal Syndicate, which see.

**Crux News Service**, 473 Grand Ave., Leonia, N. J. Historical and political features; considers "The Unknown in History," 600 words. Outright purchase, current rates.

**Detrick (Betty) Features**, 3rd and Hill St. Bldg., Los Angeles. Fully stocked at present.

**Dench Business Features**, Ho-Ho-Kus, N. J. Material on general subjects, staff-written. Considers only professional photos of striking window and interior displays. Royalties, 50% of gross receipts. Ernest A. Dench.

**Devil Dog Syndicate**, 33 Delmonico Pl., Brooklyn, N. Y. Uses both staff and free-lance material. Sports, news, short-stories, serials, first and second rights, all lengths. Outright purchase, flat rates.

**Dominion News Bureau, Ltd.**, 455 Craig St., W., Montreal, Canada. Represents U. S. syndicates in Canada. Handles limited amount of material from Canada free-lances.

**Donner's Fashion Service**, 1775 Broadway, New York. Fashion material all obtained from regular sources.

**Doubleday-Doran Syndicate**, 14 W. 49th St., New York. Syndicates only books published by the Doubleday-Doran & Co.

**Dudgeon Feature Service**, 1236 Maccaebes Bldg., Detroit. Not in market at present.

**Editors Press Service, Inc.**, 220 E. 42nd St., New York. Considers serials, feature articles, cartoons, crossword puzzles, news pictures, comic strips, news photos, scientific material. Foreign language features.

**Editor's Copy**, Orangeburg, S. C. All staff-written.

**Elliott Service Co., Inc.**, 219 E. 44th St., New York. Considers news pictures, scientific subjects; photos of auto accidents, fires, industrial and manufacturing plants, safety work, mining. Buys outright for news photo displays—does not syndicate for resale. Material need not be exclusive. \$2 up, payment on acceptance. A. L. Luhatty.

**Ellis Service**, Swarthmore, Pa. Religious features; not in market for material.

**Elyton Syndicate**, 60 E. 42nd St., New York. Considers legal and semi-legal popularized material. 60-40 percentage.

**Epsilon Press Service**, Box 43, Bath Beach, Brooklyn, N. Y. Uses some free-lance short-stories, first and second rights, feature articles, cartoons, poems, news features, news pictures, columns, comic strips, historical matter. Mail 3x5 index card with name, address, class of material. Rates by arrangement.

**Esquire Features, Inc.**, 919 N. Michigan Ave., Chicago. General syndicate. Howard Denby.

**European Picture Service**, 353 Fifth Ave., New York. (Paul Thompson Photos.) In market for photos of all kinds, particularly series of story-telling pictures, so-called features. Specialists in handling of color pictures. Exclusive U. S. and European photographic material of semi-news or feature character, world-wide scope. 50-50 royalties or outright purchase. Max Peter Haas.

**Exclusive Features Syndicate**, 131 Columbia Rd., No. 42, Dorchester, Boston, Mass. Features famous names interviews. Buys first rights to serials, short-stories; feature articles, news features, news photos. Rates by arrangement.

**Fact Feature Syndicate**, 17 Vanderbilt Rd., Manhasset, N. Y. Fact feature articles, 1500 to 2500 words; first and second rights to serials, 60,000 to 90,000 words; news pictures, 1000-word captions. Query. Outright purchase or 50% royalties.

**Feature News Service**, 229 W. 43d St., New York. (Affiliated with N. Y. Times.) Uses no outside material. John Van Bibber.

**Feature Sales Syndicate**, 540 N. Michigan Ave., Chicago. Not in the market for material unless specifically ordered. Royalties. S. I. Neiman, general mgr.

**Federated Press**, 30 Irving Place, New York. Labor news and features. Occasionally buys exclusive stories of interest to organized labor nationally; must be well authenticated, under 600 words. Exclusive strike action photos. About 1, Pub.

**Film City Syndicate**, 4110 Monroe St., Hollywood, Calif. News, features, photos, studio stories, columns, second rights to serials and short-stories. Wm. J. Burton, Jr., Mng. Ed. 50-50 percentage basis.

**Fine Arts Syndicate**, P. O. Box 852, Chicago. Purchases some circulation features from free-lances. "One good circulation feature will make you rich." Top royalties, Acc. Philip Janes, editor.

**Foreign Press Syndicate**, 1501 Broadway, New York. Motion-picture features, articles by "name" personalities. Serials, short-stories, cartoons, comic strips, news photos. Buys first European and British rights, 30 to 50 percentage basis.

**Galloway (Ewing)**, 420 Lexington Ave., New York. Buys prints or negatives of marketable photos except spot news. Timely stuff not wanted. Outright purchase, payment on acceptance.

**General Features Syndicate, Inc.**, 545 5th Ave., New York. Comics; considers jokes, news features, work of comic artists. Percentage basis. Oregon Peter Van Thien.

**Gilliams Service, Inc.**, 225 W. 39th St., New York. All material obtained from regular sources.

**Globe Photos**, 33 W. 42nd St., New York. Interested in good photos, preferably in series form—6 or more—science, human-interest, oddities, invention, etc.; considers single photos. Exclusive news photos only. Advertising stock photos, industrials, excavation, sciences, etc. 40% royalties on gross sales, 20th of each month. Mildred Mann.

**Graphic Features**, McAlpin Hotel, New York. Photo service. Considers news and features photos from free-lances, human-interest, personalities, science, agriculture, etc. Percentage basis.

**Graves, Ralph H.**, 449 4th Ave., New York. Published novels only; rarely considers free-lance work.

**Handy Filler Service**, 1810 Russ Bldg., San Francisco. News and semi-news, all staff-written.

**Harris-Ewing Photo News Service**, 1313 F. St., N. W., Washington, D. C. News photos. Royalty basis.

**Haskin Service**, 316 Eye St., N. E., Washington, D. C. All material staff-written.

**Handy Filler Service**, 1810 Russ Bldg., San Francisco. News and semi-news, all staff-written.

**Haskin Service**, 316 Eye St., N. E., Washington, D. C. All material staff-written.

**Health News Service**, 1035 Nat'l Press Bldg., Washington, D. C. News features. 1c a word, Pub.

**Heini Radio News Service**, 2400 California St., Washington, D. C. Radio news having to do with legislation, staff-prepared.

**Hollister (H. H.) Organization, Inc.**, Suite 203 Chronicle Bldg., San Francisco, Calif. Word-building promotion and all types of circulation features; some purchased from free-lances. Percentage basis.

**Hollywood Doings Feature Syndicate**, 642 N. Juanita Ave., Hollywood, Calif. (Affiliated with Atlantic & Pacific Feature Syndicate.) Motion-picture, radio, books, night life, news photos, columns, cartoons. Purchases some from free-lances. 50-50 percentage basis.

**Hollywood Press Syndicate**, 6605 Hollywood Blvd., Hollywood, Calif. Supplies newspapers, etc., in all parts of world except United States and Canada. Can use fact adventure, illustrated interviews with prominent persons, news and feature photographs. 50-50 percentage. Jos. B. Polonsky, Mgr.

**Holmes Feature Service**, 135 Garrison Ave., Jersey City, N. J. Mostly regular sources; buys some from free-lances. Scientific and general feature articles, news features, news photos. Outright purchase or 50% royalties.

**Hopkins Syndicate, Inc.**, 520 N. Michigan Ave., Chicago. Educational column, staff-written. C. E. Miller, Jr.

**Horticultural Oddities Feature Syndicate**, 336 Holmquist Bldg., Tarzana, Calif. Gardening, farming, landscaping articles, photos; some purchased from free-lances. Write before submitting. Outright purchase, rates depending on material.

**Industrial News Service**, 406 Market St., St. Louis, Mo. News and feature articles, photos, cartoons, columns, mostly from staff but considers free-lance work. Query first. Varying rates, Acc.

**Intercity News Service**, 63 Park Row, New York. Spot news and special features, news pictures; rarely uses outside copy. E. W. Nassauer.

**International Labor News Service**, 609 Carpenters Bldg., Washington, D. C. Labor news, feature articles, principally obtained from regular sources. 1/4c word, Pub.

**International News Service**, 235 E. 45th St., New York. All material staff-prepared.

**International Religious News Service**, 1831 Sheldon Rd., E. Cleveland, Ohio. Religious news features, from regular sources.

**International Syndicate**, 1617 Guilford Ave., Baltimore, Md. General features, staff-written.

**Jewish Telegraphic Agency**, 1560 Broadway, New York. Staff columnists; buys occasional feature articles of Jewish interest. \$5 to \$10 per article, 1000-1200 words. H. Wishengrad.

**Jordan Syndicate**, Albee Bldg., Washington, D. C. Considers feature photos for magazines and photo sections. Query on national color photos. \$3 up, and 50-50 royalties.

**Judy (Will) Press Syndicate**, 3323 Michigan Blvd., Chicago. Dog features. No market for submitted material.

**Junior Feature Syndicate**, 507 5th Ave., New York. Children's features obtained from regular sources. Not in market.

**Keystone Press Feature Service, Ltd.**, 130 W. 46th St., New York. Syndicates comics, fiction, news articles. Considers first and second rights to serials, short-stories; feature articles, news features, news pictures, comic art. Percentage basis. W. A. Spilo.

**Keystone View Co.**, 219 E. 44th St., New York. Material 70% staff-prepared. Considers good quality photos, geographic, scenic, children, home scenes, farm scenes, etc.; feature articles with photos. Outright purchases or 50-50 percentage basis. E. P. Van Loon.

**King Editors Features**, 14 Prospect Place, East Orange, N. J. Considers articles of interest to retailers generally in series (2 to 12), 800 to 1500 words each. Royalties.

**King Features Syndicate, Inc.**, 235 E. 45th St., New York. Considers first or second rights to serials, first rights to short-stories; feature articles, news features, scientific and specialized material, work of columnists, comic art, cartoons, crossword puzzles. Payment on publication, percentage basis.

**Ledger Syndicate**, Independence Squ., Philadelphia. General syndicate; buys some material from free-lances. Considers first rights to 50,000-word serials, romantic 4000-word short-stories, feature articles 2500; comic strips. 50% royalties.

**Lincoln Newspaper Features, Inc.**, 130 W. 46th St., New York. Subsidiary of Keystone Press Feature Service, Ltd.

**Lukens & Pattison**, P. O. Box 731, New Haven, Conn. Places photographers', artists' and authors' material on percentage basis (50%).

**Matz Feature Syndicate**, 523 Weiser St., Reading, Pa. Scientific subjects, screen aviation articles, news pictures, comic strips. Usual rates, Pub. Ralph S. Matz. (Slow reports.)

**McClure Newspaper Syndicate**, 75 West St., New York. Buys first rights to short stories, 900-1000 words, page stories, 3200-3400; love interest required in longer stories. Crime themes barred. Short-stories \$5, short-stories \$25, publication. A. P. Waldo, fiction Ed.

**McNaught Syndicate, Inc.**, 45 E. Putnam Ave., Greenwich, Conn. Material usually obtained from regular sources, occasionally from free-lance contributors. Considers cartoons, columns, comic strips. No set rate.

**Meissner (John N.)**, Statler Bldg., Boston, Mass. Not interested in outside contributions.

**Metropolitan Newspaper Feature Service, Inc.**, Suite 1110, 220 E. 42nd St., New York. (Same as United Feature Syndicate.)

**Miller Newspaper Syndicate**, Lloyd Bldg., 12th and Vliet Sts., Milwaukee, Wis. 90% staff-written. Considers feature articles. Marew Miller. 1c a word.

**Morgan, Ralph**, Newspictures, Newark Airport, N. J. News photos, all kinds, some obtained from free-lances. Desires Northern New Jersey people at resorts, etc. Payment, \$2 up.

**National Aero Reserve**, Box 35, East Rockaway, L. I. Aviation column, considers 600 to 1200-word articles, preferably illustrated, on aviation subjects. Model plane material. 1/4c, Acc. D. B. Thomson.

**National Feature Service**, 4035 New Hampshire Ave., Washington, D. C. Regular and free-lance sources. Feature articles, columns, comic strips. Royalties.

**National News-Features Syndicate**, 535 5th Ave., New York. News features, usually staff-written. Considers feature articles. Payment on publication, 2 cents a word. Harry Klemfuss.

**National Newspaper Service, Inc.**, 326 W. Madison St., Chicago. Will consider continuing features that can be run daily year after year; humor preferred. Columns. Comic strips. Percentage basis.

**National News Service, Inc.**, 1701 N. Broad St., Philadelphia. Colored comics. Not in the market.



**National Service Syndicate**, Suite 919, Shoreham Bldg., Washington, D. C. News, staff prepared.

**Nation-Wide News Service**, 420 Lexington Ave., New York. News and photographs, newspapers and trade publications. Paul White, Mng. Ed.

**NEA Service, Inc.**, 1200 W. 3rd St., Cleveland, Ohio. General syndicate. "We are not in the market for any material."

**New Jersey Press Bureau**, 106 Jefferson St., Weehawken, N. J. Considers news features, photos, trade magazine features, cartoons, short and short-short stories. Query and/or send samples. 33 1/3 to 50 percentage basis.

**Newspaper Boys of America, Inc.**, 714 Merchants Bank Bldg., Indianapolis, Ind. Considers circulation promotion feature articles. Payment on publication.

**Newspaper Features, Inc.**, 1530 Healey Bldg., Atlanta, Ga. Chiefly staff-written. General material pertaining to advancement of southern states industry, finance, etc., no fiction. Flat rates on publication. J. C. Wilson.

**Newspaper Information Service, Inc.**, 1013 13th St., N. W., Washington, D. C. Question and answer service, not in market.

**New York Herald-Tribune Syndicate**, 230 W. 41st St., New York. Syndicates Herald Tribune features; occasionally buys from free-lance. Columns, comics, crossword puzzles, 50-50 percentage basis.

**North Jersey News Bureau**, 230 Washington St., Orange, N. J. Northern New Jersey spot news, news features, mostly from regular sources; occasional assignments. 50-50 basis.

**Nu-Way Features**, 201 N. Wells St., Chicago. Pastime features, puzzles, short short-stories, 400-600 words; serials, 8000-10,000. Payment on publication, varying rates.

**Oakley (P. B.)**, Box 331, Geneva, N. Y. Considers photos—fires, floods, disasters, etc. Especially desires farm scenes, country roads, streams, etc. Payment on publication.

**Original Features**, 201 N. Wells, Chicago. Not in the market at present. G. Melikov.

**Pacific Press Service**, 11 E. 44th St., New York. Material obtained from regular correspondents. W. Y. Young.

**Pan-Hellenic American Foreign Press Syndicate**, 1228 Park Row Bldg., New York. Religious service.

**Parade of Youth News Service**, 1727 K. St., N. W., Washington, D. C. Not in the market. Wm. Kroger, Mng. Ed.

**Paragon Features Syndicate**, 7428 W. 61st Pl., Argo, Ill. General features. Considers science, weird, fantastic fiction. 50-50 percentage basis. Julian S. Krupa, Mng. Ed.

**Park Row News Service**, 280 Broadway, New York. News and features, staff-written. Theodore Kaufman.

**Paul's Photos**, 537 S. Dearborn St., Chicago. Unusual or artistic photos, world views from world travelers; farm scenes, children's activities. 1/3 percentage.

**Peerless Fashion Service, Inc.**, 121 W. 19th St., New York. Fashion articles and pictures. Payment at market price.

**Penn Feature Syndicate**, 2417 N. 15th St., Philadelphia. News and technical notes, staff-prepared.

**Phoenix Republic & Gazette Syndicate**, P. O. Box 1950, Phoenix, Ariz. Cartoons from own publications; no outside material.

**Pictorial Feature Service**, 11 1/2 E. 49th St., New York. Sunday magazine and illustrated roto features, chiefly staff-written or from regular contributors. Few bought from free-lance. Outright purchase, or 40% royalty.

**Pictorial Press**, 1658 Broadway, New York. Photos of notables and events. Pays regular rates.

**Press Enterprises**, 624 N. Juanita Ave., Hollywood, Calif. (Affiliated with Atlantic & Pacific Feature Syndicate, etc.) Staff material only.

**Progressive Features**, 905 N. 5th St., Springfield, Ill. Buys no outside material.

**Publishers Financial Bureau**, Babson Park, Mass. Business articles, staff prepared.

**Publishers Syndicate**, 30 N. La Salle St., Chicago. Considers cartoons, columns, comic strips. Royalties or percentage. Harold H. Anderson.

**Rapid Grip and Batten, Ltd.**, 181 Richmond St., W., Toronto, Canada. News service and general features.

**Recipe Service Co.**, 3160 Kensington Ave., Philadelphia. Food publicity syndicate. No outside material.

**Register & Tribune Syndicate**, Des Moines, Ia. First rights to serials, 30-36 chapters, 1200 wds. each; comic strips. No single articles. Royalties. Henry P. Martin, Jr.

**Religious Copy Service**, 2715 Overbrook Terrace, Ardmore, Pa. Go-to-Church advertisements, staff-written. Not in market.

**Religious News Service**, 300 Fourth Ave., New York. Issued by National Conference of Jews and Christians. Significant, timely religious news stories; religious features; religious spot news; short-stories presenting Christian-Jewish relationships. 1c. Pub. Openings for correspondents.

**Russell Service**, 254 Fern St., Hartford, Conn. Articles and columns on automobiles and motoring. All staff-prepared.

**Schrage Science Photos**, 510 Cathedral Parkway, New York. Interested in photos covering entire field of scientific activities. New inventions, gadgets, machinery, oddities, etc., explanatory captions. 8x10 glossy prints preferred. 50-50 percentage basis or outright purchase. W. E. Schrage.

**Science Service, Inc.**, 2101 Constitution Ave., N. W., Washington, D. C. Science feature articles, news photos. Considers some free-lance material. Payment on acceptance. 1c a word average. Watson Davis.

**Seckatary Hawkins Service**, Enquirer Bldg., Cincinnati, O. All material staff-prepared.

**Seven Arts Feature Syndicate**, 432 4th Ave., New York. Material of Jewish interest, staff-written.

**Short Features Syndicate**, 1438 Carlisle Ave., Racine, Wis. All material staff-written. Ralph Schoenleben.

**Six Star Service**, 475 5th Ave., New York. Economic features from regular sources. Not in market. H. W. Schmid.

**Skuddabud Creations, Inc.**, 42 Broadway, Rm. 1642, New York. Feature articles, poems, news features, columns, news photos, cartoons, comic strips, scientific, and general material. Serials, short-stories, first and second rights. Considers free-lance work. Query first. Royalties. L. W. Browne, Bus Mgr. 50-50 percentage basis.

**Southern (William), Jr.**, 639 S. Park Ave., Independence, Mo. Syndicates Sunday school lessons by Mr. Southern only.

**Southern News Service**, Box 2489, Birmingham, Ala. Purchases some trade journal photos and articles. Varying rates, Pub.

**Soviet Foto Agency**, 723 7th Ave., New York. Photos. Query before offering material.

**Standard Editorial Service**, Chandler Bldg., Washington, D. C.

**Standard Press Assn.**, 285 Columbus Ave., Boston. Feature articles, news features, fillers, columns.

**Star Newspaper Service**, 80 King St., West, Toronto, Ont., Canada. (Syndicate department of the Toronto Star.) All types of material with British or Canadian angle, chiefly from regular sources. First rights to serials 30,000 words; short-stories, 1000 words; news features and pictures. Avoid Americanisms. Royalties, 50%. F. P. Hotson.

**Swiftnews**, Times Bldg., New York. (Affiliated with Authenticated News.) Illustrated news features; scientific and candid camera series; micrographs; outstanding news features for roto-gravure pages. Outright purchase, varying rates. Stephen K. Swift.

**Technical News Service**, 621 Albee Bldg., Washington, D. C. Staff material only.

**Towson (W. Orton), Syndicate**, 420 Riverside Drive, New York. All material staff-written.

**Thompson (Paul) Photos**, 353 5th Ave., New York. See European Picture Service.

**Thompson Service**, 818 Oak St., Cincinnati, O. Features, cartoons, comic strips, scientific material. 50-50 royalties.

**Trade Journal Syndicate**, 475 5th Ave., New York. Does not consider free-lance material.

**Trumbull (Faith) Society News**, 83 Fairfield Ave., Bridgeport, Conn. All material staff-prepared.

**20th Century News Syndicate**, 2721 Rimpau Blvd., Los Angeles, Calif. Material from regular sources only.

**Ullman Feature Service**, Chandler Bldg., Washington, D. C.

**United Feature Syndicate, Inc.**, Suite 220 E. 42nd St., New York. (Affiliated with United Press.) Considers love serials, occasionally romantic adventure or mystery, 35 installments, 1200-1500 words each. Payment \$150 each. Non-fiction material usually from regular sources; considers distinctive ideas for continuous features—columns, cartoons, comic strips, etc. No separate features. Frances Rule, fiction Ed.

**United News Service**, 3655 Woodlawn Ave., New Orleans, La. Trade paper news and features; especially interested in the South. Needs 1500-word articles on proven advertising sales merchandising plans and campaigns with definite results. 60% percentage to correspondents.

**Universal Press Syndicate**, Box 1240, Sarasota, Fla. Considers feature articles, cartoons, news pictures, comic strips. 20 to 40% royalty.

**Universal Trade Press Syndicate**, 724 Fifth Ave., New York. News agency covering business papers; inquire for staff vacancies. M. S. Blumenthal.

**Walsh (Christy) Syndicate**, 235 E. 45th St., New York. Sport features, staff-prepared, but open to suggestions or ideas.

**Washington Post News Service**, Post Bldg., Washington, D. C. Syndicates only material from Washington Post.

**Washington Radio News Service**, 621 Albee Bldg., Washington, D. C. Radio features, all staff written.

**Watkins Syndicate, Inc.**, 2214 Chestnut St., Philadelphia. Material by noted authors and artists.

**Weissman (Len) Photos**, Hollywood Knickerbocker Hotel, Hollywood, Calif. Hollywood news photos, staff only.

**Western Newspaper Union**, 210 S. Desplaines St., Chicago. All material from regular sources. Not in the market.

**Wide World Photos, Inc.**, 229 W. 43d St., New York. News photos.

**Woehrlé News Service**, 153 Centre St., New York. News stories of New York local interest. Alexander J. Woehrlé.

**Women's Guild**, Suite 202-228 McKerchy Bldg., Detroit, Mich. Not in the market.

**Woman's Page Copy**, Plymouth, Ind. Home and mother features written by Florence A. Boys. No outside copy.

**World Color Printing Co.**, 420 De Soto Ave., St. Louis. Colored comics all obtained from regular sources.

**World Wide News Service**, 56 Bellevue St., Newton, Mass. Not in the market for free-lance material.



#### NEWS SERVICES—PRESS ASSOCIATIONS

**Associated Press**, 383 Madison Ave., New York.

**British United Press**, 30 Bouverie St., London, Eng.

**Central Press Assn.**, 1435 E. 12th St., Cleveland, O.

**Intercity News Service**, 63 Park Row, New York.

**International News Service**, 235 E. 45th St., New York.

**NEA Service, Inc.**, 1200 W. 3d St., Cleveland, O.

**New York Herald Tribune News Service**, 230 W. 41st St., New York.

**North American Newspaper Alliance**, 247 W. 43d St., New York.

**United Press**, 220 E. 42nd St., New York.

# LITERARY MARKET TIPS

*Scribner's Magazine*, 570 Lexington Ave., New York, sends the following resumé of the kind of material it is seeking. The statement is signed by Don Wharton, executive editor: (1) *Short Novels*: Want one a month. The type can best be explained by citing a couple we ran and liked: Jerome Weidman's "What's In It For Me?" and Elick Moll's "There Is Still the Night." Use around 15,000 words but usually find no difficulty trimming (with author's help) from much greater length. Sometimes, as in the case of Dorothy Canfield's "Seasoned Timbers," use a section of a full-length novel. Like to see any good short novel, hear about any full novel manuscript which you think could be converted into magazine form. (2) *Scribner's Examines Articles*: Want one personality story a month. Like to work out subject with writer and assign him a story. Examine people who have influence on life, thought and actions in this country. Like to have ideas submitted by writers, but frequently find manuscript not aimed at us can be redone to fit our pattern. (3) *Reenactions*: Want articles re-examining the past, such as one we did on film "Birth of a Nation" and another on the "1917 Mutiny of French Army." Subjects for reenaction must have something new; not just rewrite of newspaper clips; best ones are stories whose importance at the time was not recognized or whose telling at the time was impossible, on account of censorship, etc. Generally subjects should be 20th century. Must be directly or indirectly connected with life in the United States and apropos what's going on today. (4) *Previews*: Looking for ideas for previews such as our "Advertising the Next War," "Electing a Republican President," "Selling George VI to the U. S." These are not prediction articles nor articles telling what should happen. Rather, articles showing how something which a great many people want to happen could be made to happen. This formula is entirely new with us, rather difficult for writers to grasp without looking over the ones we've published. Our standard price for short novels is \$500. We have no standard price for articles. Set the price with the writer (or his agent) when he takes the assignment. Generally pay around \$300 or \$350 for a Scribner's Examines article. Now and then a little less, now and then a little more.

Winford Publishing Co., 60 Hudson St., New York, and associated companies, now list their magazines as the Blue Ribbon group, rather than the Double-Action group, as heretofore. A new member of the group is *Detective and Murder Mysteries*, a bi-monthly devoted to cleverly plotted short-stories and novelettes. A. J. Sundell is editor. Rates of 1/2 cent a word and up on acceptance are announced. (Several magazines of the group are reported as slow in payment for material.)

Red Circle Magazines, formerly at RKO Bldg., have moved to larger quarters in the McGraw-Hall Bldg., 330 W. 42nd St., New York. The Red Circle emblem includes Newsstand Publications, Inc., and associated companies, Western Fiction Publication Co., Inc., and Manvis Publications, Inc.

*True Romances*, P. O. Box 527, Grand Central Station, New York, of the Macfadden group, announces that it has set aside \$3000 for the purchase of short true romances submitted on or before June 30, 1939. "By short short true romances is meant short true stories of dramatic quality—stories dealing with the problems of American life, stories of courtship and marriage, sincerely told with honesty and warmth, the kind of stories that happen in the life of the average American family—nothing fantastic, nothing melodramatic, nothing cheap, but simple, beautiful stories of the dramas that occur in the lives of American men and women. Stories submitted under this offer must range from 2500 to 4500 words in length. For such stories we are prepared to pay up to \$250 each. This is not a contest but a straight offer to purchase. We pay for accepted manuscripts as soon as they are passed upon and approved for purchase." Stories presumably must be written in the first person.

*Movie Mirror* asks for real life stories. It states: "Believing that our readers have—within their own lives—as heart-warming and compelling histories as any that have ever been brought to the screen, the editors have secured the promise of the biggest Hollywood companies to read each story published for possible film production. Aside from whatever settlement motion picture studios may make for permission to use your story on the screen, we will pay the author of each story chosen for publication not less than \$100. Write your own story legibly on one side of the paper only, total length not to exceed 6000 words, and send it to 'My Own Story Editor,' *Movie Mirror*, 122 E. 42nd St., New York. Offer will remain open until further notice."

*Host, The Magazine of Home Entertainment*, 404 Fourth Ave., New York, is a new quarterly. Frank Caspers, editor, writes: "*Host* will use articles on entertainment in and about the home. This includes articles on sports, food and liquor, radio, parties of all kinds, also historical articles relating to this field, photography, games, and simple magic. All articles should be strongly tied in with the field of home entertainment. As *Host* is to be issued four times a year, wherever possible the seasonable angle should be stressed. Payment for all material is on publication." (Rates are not stated.)

*Future*, 134 N. La Salle St., Chicago, a magazine for young men published in the interests of the United States Junior Chamber of Commerce, announces the appointment of Felix B. Streyckmans as editor. The magazine will accept fictional material and articles of 2500 to 3000 words, of interest to young men of Junior Chamber age, 21 to 35 years, paying up to 2 cents per word. Whether on acceptance or on publication is not stated.

*Canadian Magazine*, 349 W. Adelaide St., Toronto, Ont., Canada, founded in 1823, has been discontinued.

*Bandwagon, "The Magazine of the Southwest,"* Ramsey Tower Bldg., Oklahoma City, Okla., is now edited by Nell Marie Berry, who succeeds Martin Hefflin.

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We don't ask writers with ability to pay the full cost of their training. We can't collaborate with a writer without some charge—pennies haven't started falling from Heaven, yet—but we do assume a big part of the cost. We back those we believe in with our own time and money, looking to commissions on sales for our real profit.

Send a manuscript and receive full details of this outstanding new service. Don't delay—this offer will not be repeated!

**COMFORT** *Writer's Service* 107 N. EIGHTH ST.  
ST. LOUIS, MO.

*Daring Detective*, *Startling Detective*, and *Dynamic Detective*, fact-detective magazines of the Country Press, Inc., 1501 Broadway, New York, (affiliated with Fawcett Magazines) are increasing their rates of payment to 2 cents a word and up. The prevailing rate for pictures will continue at \$3 for all prints used. Text is paid for on acceptance, pictures on publication. The editors write: "None of these magazines is overstocked. In fact, the editors wish to build up an inventory. If you have cases in mind, or can find cases, be sure to query the editor with a short outline of the case before writing it."

*Farm Journal* and *The Farmer's Wife*, Washington Squ., Philadelphia, announces the appointment of Wheeler McMillen as editor-in-chief. Mr. McMillen was formerly editorial director of *The Country Home*.

*Headline Detective* has replaced the title, *Strange Romances*, one of the Dell true detective magazines, 149 Madison Ave., New York. West F. Peterson, editor, still desires true stories with pictures, involving crimes of passion, in lengths up to 5000 words. A good mystery angle is necessary, and an official by-line is preferred. Payment is at 1½ cents a word, on acceptance, photos \$3.

The Greystone Press, book publishing company, has moved from 11 W. 42nd St. to 40 E. 49th St., New York.

*The Catholic Girl* should be addressed at 1113 Winstanley Ave., East St., Louis, Illinois, instead of Missouri, as erroneously listed in our last issue. Adolph B. Suess, editor, in calling the error to our attention, writes that he will not consider further contributions before June 15th, owing to a present full supply of material.

*Western Raider*, 205 E. 42nd St., New York, has been discontinued by Popular Publications.

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Jane Hardy was formerly on the editorial staff of Macmillan Company. She is highly recommended by Harold S. Latham, Ida Tarbell, Henry Goddard Leach, Hamlin Garland, and others.

Send for circular, and for letters of recommendation from George Horace Lorimer, H. L. Mencken, John Farrar, William C. Lengel, H. E. Maule, William Allen White, Marie M. Meloney, H. C. Paxton, Fulton Oursler, Thayer Hobson, Marjory Stoneman Douglas and others.

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*For People Everywhere*, 122 E. 42nd St., New York, uses a number of short articles up to 2000 words each, and a short short-story in each issue. "Except for the fiction, material is mostly staff-written," writes A. J. Vossen, editor, "but we have bought a few things which fitted closely our requirements. Most of our articles are about interesting people and their doings—either well-known people or those carrying on some unusual work. The slant is distinctive, and we urge contributors to read a copy of the magazine before sending any material. Manuscripts will be reported upon within two weeks. Payment at present is on acceptance, on the basis of a flat rate arranged with the author."

*Amazing Stories*, 608 S. Dearborn St., New York, science-fiction monthly of the Ziff-Davis Company, now uses novels up to 30,000 words. The same upper limit is placed on its companion magazine, *Fantastic Adventures*, which is being issued on a bi-monthly schedule. Rates are 1 cent a word and up, on acceptance, with bonuses for stories adjudged best by reader vote.

Rumors that the Frank A. Munsey Company group of magazines was to be sold, apparently are unfounded. A. H. Gibney, manager of the group, states definitely that all offers have been turned down and the magazines are going ahead on their own steam.

*Ken*, 919 N. Michigan Ave., Chicago, in its new weekly format, prefers its "inside" stories to be kept within lengths of 500 to 2000 words. Payment is still announced by Editor Arnold Gingrich at from \$100 to \$1000 per article, on acceptance.

*Your Body* has been combined with *Know Yourself*, 99 Hudson St., New York. *Know Yourself* is edited by Hugo Gernsback and is devoted to discussion of sex, domestic, and personal problems, avoiding medical and biology (which are covered in a companion magazine, *Sexology*), as well as psychological technicalities and language. Rates are announced at ½ to 1 cent a word on publication.

*The Saturday Review of Literature* has been purchased by Joseph Hilton Smyth and Harrison Smith, 420 Madison Ave., New York, who publish also *The Living Age*, *The North American Review*, and *Current History*. George Stevens continues as editor of *The Saturday Review*.

*Sexology*, 99 Hudson St., New York, is now edited by Frank Leighton Wood, M.D., who succeeds David H. Keller.

The North American Publishing Co., Payne Ave. at 22nd St., Cleveland, Ohio, is a new book publishing company. S. R. Sague, president, is reported to be in the market for suitable manuscripts of any type.

*Contrast*, issued by the Stet Company, 1445 W. Jackson Blvd., Chicago, has been suspended. Jan Grimm of the company writes that it is hoped that publication may be resumed in September.

*Pacific Sportsman*, formerly at 401 Sansome St., is now located at 580 Market St., San Francisco. It uses articles on tennis, golf, yachting, hunting and fishing, and amateur sports, from 500 to 2500 words in length, also photos. This periodical pays for material on publication at rates arranged with the individual, according to William W. Paul, editor.

*Personal Romances*, 122 E. 42nd St., New York, is now edited by Ruth L. Baer, who succeeds Mrs. May C. Kelley.

*Better Understanding*, formerly at Riverside, Calif., should now be addressed at P. O. Box 453, Palo Alto, Calif. It is overstocked at present.

*Radio Stars*, 149 Madison Ave., New York, of the Dell group, has been discontinued.



*Town and Country*, 572 Madison Ave., New York, is now "interested in articles of 1000 to 3000 words on personalities, travel, sports, and topical events," writes Lora Hale, of the staff. "Satire and articles on unusual subjects and places, with photographs suitable for illustrations, are particularly sought. Rates in proportion to length, news value, and quantity of new material."

*All-Story Love Tales*, 280 Broadway, New York, of the Munsey group, edited by Miss Amita Fairgrieve, stresses romantic fiction based on emotional conflict. It now uses short-stories 4000 to 7000 words in length, novelettes up to 12,000, and short-stories of 25,000 to 30,000. Good rates are paid on acceptance.

*The American Boy*, 7430 2nd Blvd., Detroit, Mich., in addition to the fiction requirements previously listed in the A. & J. market directory, uses non-fiction of interest to boys and young men in lengths up to 2500 words. Payment is at 2 cents a word and up, on acceptance.

*H-T-T Outdoorsman*, 386 S. Fourth St., Columbus, Ohio, formerly *Hunter-Trader-Trapper*, is interested in big-game hunting stories. Otto Kuechler, editor, announces rates of 1/2 cent a word, on acceptance.

*American Farm Youth Magazine*, Jackson at Van Buren, Danville, Ill., is interested in short-stories of from 100 to 350 words. Payment is at 1/4 cent a word and up, on publication.

*Science and Mechanics*, 800 N. Clark St., Chicago, informs a contributor that each of its departments is under the leadership of a specialist. "We make each editor responsible for the material in his department," writes V. D. Angerman, publisher. "He either builds the projects himself or secures them from other sources. I have nothing to do with the purchase of this material, nor do I enter into its selection." It would appear from this statement that contributors wishing to reach this market should query the editor of the department for which their material is suitable.

*Western Romances*, 149 Madison Ave., New York, in addition to Western love short-stories, uses novelettes from 10,000 to 18,000 words in length. Rates paid are 1 1/4 cent a word on acceptance.

*Camera Craft*, 425 Bush St., San Francisco, Calif., uses articles of 1500 to 2500 words; no fiction or fillers. The phrase, "Technical and artistic aspects of photography written for the advanced amateur" indicates the type of article desired, according to the editor, George Allen Young. Good photographs should accompany articles. Payment is on publication at 1/2 cent a word plus \$1 per illustration. "Higher rates for exceptional material," Mr. Young adds.

*Southern Agriculturist*, Nashville, Tenn., uses children's stories in addition to adult short-stories of from 800 to 4000 words. Photos, art work, cartoons, and cartoon ideas are considered. Payment is made on acceptance at rates based on merit of material, states J. E. Stanford, editor.

Ben Bard Players, 6040 Wilshire Boulevard, Los Angeles, Calif., is a little theatre operated by Ben Bard, husband of the late Ruth Roland, and long connected with the theatrical and motion-picture business. Mr. Bard produces a number of original plays each year, and will consider three-act plays for possible production. According to Gertrude Ross, of the manuscript department, any question of terms will be taken up individually with the playwright at the time of acceptance.

*The Kenyon Review*, Gambier, Ohio, a quarterly of arts and letters edited by John Crowe Ransom, reports that its needs are already well cared for.

*Post Time Weekly*, 542 S. Dearborn St., Chicago, has been discontinued.

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L. Edward Forester

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Seventeen years success in developing new writers like Mr. Forester into big-time professionals back my contention that if you have talent, I can also help you. Will you let me prove, by an actual demonstration on two of your manuscripts, what I can do for you? I'll meet you half-way with this special offer:

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During May, you can include an extra story of equal length with any manuscript accompanied by my regular reading fee, mentioned below, and I will give you my full help and advice on both stories for the price of one. (For example, you may send two 5000 word stories for \$5.00.)

My fees are \$1.00 per thousand words on manuscripts up to 5000; on scripts 5000 to 11,000, my fee is \$5.00 for the first 5000 words and 75c for each additional thousand. Special rates on novelets and hooks. For these fees I honestly appraise your work and recommend salable scripts to editors requesting such material. If your story is unsalable, I tell you why in full detail; if revision will make it salable,

I explain how and for which specific market to rewrite. SELLING WRITERS: if you have sold \$500. worth or more within last year, write for special terms.

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W. E. Schrage, Science & Press Photos, 510 Cathedral Parkway, New York, writes: "I am interested in photos covering the entire field of scientific activities, from A to Z; from Archaeology down to Zoology, and everything between—flowers, chemistry, medicine, etc. I am always in the market for complete collections of science pictures, even if they are a few years old, as long as they are suitable to illustrate scientific articles and textbooks. New inventions, new gadgets, new machinery, oddities, etc., are always welcome. All pictures should have explanatory captions long enough to give the editor a correct idea of the point to be driven home. 8 by 10 glossy prints are preferred; if not available, send negatives. I deal on a 50-50 basis, but am willing to buy outright at a reasonable price."

*Rocky Mountain Sportsman*, 1644 Welton St., Denver, Colo., is overstocked with material and will not be in the market for a year or longer, reports Joseph Emerson Smith, editor. The magazine is now paying on publication.

*Weird Tales*, 9 Rockefeller Plaza, New York, devoted to weird and bizarre fiction, is in need of short filler stories up to 2500 words in length. Farnsworth Wright, editor, announces rates of 1 cent a word and up, on publication.

The resignation of John F. Byrne from the editorial staff of the Frank A. Munsey Company, is announced. No change is contemplated in the editorial policies of the magazines in this group.

*Complete Cowboy Magazine* has been discontinued by Blue Ribbon Magazines (formerly the Double-Action group) 60 Hudson St., New York.

*The Actor*, formerly at 201 Golden Gate Bldg., Los Angeles, should be listed at 324 Hyde St., Apt. 3, according to a post office notification.

*For Married People Only*, 67 W. 44th St., New York, a bi-monthly of the Atro Distributing Corp., edited by Dr. L. Pelman, seeks articles solving marital problems, up to 1500 words. Payment is at 1/2 to 1 cent a word, on publication.

*Harper's Bazaar*, 572 Madison Ave., New York, is not interested in considering any material except short-stories.

*Love Romances*, 461 8th Ave., New York, of the Fiction House group, is overstocked.

*New Masses*, formerly at 31 E. 27th St., is now located at 461 Fourth Ave., New York.

*Saturday Night*, Los Angeles, Calif., has been discontinued.

*Health and Hygiene*, 214 4th Ave., New York, is out of business.

*Pastime Magazine*, 11 W. 42nd St., New York, has been discontinued.

## PRIZE CONTESTS

*Sweetheart Stories*, 149 Madison Ave., New York, of the Dell group, announces a "New Writers' Contest," with twelve prizes of \$500 to \$50, for best stories, from 3000 to 30,000 words in length. The contest is open to anyone who has never had a work of fiction published in a magazine of national circulation. Publication in high school or college papers or local newspapers does not disqualify the contestant. Stories must be romantic fiction—dealing with ardent young love—written in the third person. They should deal with modern young people in really modern situations. Full name and address must be written in upper left-hand corner of the first page, number of words in upper right corner. Closing date, June 30, 1939.

*True Mystic Science*, 402 Corn Exchange Bldg., Minneapolis, Minn., beginning with its July, 1939, issue, will offer eight prizes every month for the best true psychic experiences submitted by readers. Prizes will be \$15, \$10, and \$5, with five additional subscription prizes. Entries must not exceed 1000 words, shorter manuscripts preferred. Pictures may be enclosed. Each entry must be accompanied by a coupon from the magazine.

*Science Fiction*, 60 Hudson St., New York, has extended the closing date of its prize contest to July 1, 1939. The contest is for best essay in from 50 to 500 words on the subject, "The essentials of good science-fiction." Prizes are \$25, \$15, two of \$5, two of cover paintings by the artist Paul, and five subscription prizes. Entries must be written on one side of 8½x11 paper, and must be in the editorial offices by the closing date.

Contributors to *Win Magazine*, 2 W. 46th St., New York, should bear in mind that all material submitted must be accompanied by an official entry blank or reasonable facsimile. These entry blanks are contained in each issue of the magazine. All departments are of a contest nature.

Thomas Cook & Son, 587 Fifth Ave., New York, have announced that they will award a Cook's Traveler's Check for \$50 for the best 300-word letter from any person on "A Book That Persuades Me to Travel!" Entries should reach Malcolm La Prade, care of the company, on or before June 1, 1939.

*Hunting & Fishing*, 275 Newberry Street, Boston, Mass., offers cash prizes of \$10, \$5, and \$3 for the three best sporting photographs submitted each month and \$1 each for those receiving honorable mention. Photographs must be taken and owned by contestants. Each print must be clearly marked on the reverse side with full name and address, make and model of camera, and film used, lens setting and shutter speed. Contestants may submit as many prints as they wish but are advised not to send negatives. No prints returned unless accompanied by postage. Entries should be addressed to the Photo Contest Editor.

*Movie Mirror*, 122 E. 42d St., New York, conducts a "Speak for Yourself" contest in which a \$20 first prize, \$10 second, and five prizes of \$1 are awarded for the best letters not to exceed 200 words in length dealing with what you think of the stars and movies.

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The rules of the All-Nations Prize Novel competition have been altered, in view of the recent arrest and charges against Eric S. Pinker, prominent authors' agent. (Mr. Pinker has been accused by E. Phillips Oppenheim, British author, of collecting more than \$10,000 due him for sales of material and unlawfully retaining it. He was arrested on March 14 on a charge of grand larceny.) The contest was to have been handled by the firm of Eric S. Pinker and Adrienne Morrison. The new rules provide that authors shall not be bound to make any commitment to this agency for handling their books. The time for submission of manuscripts (extended to May 1) is now past. It is expected that the award to the American winner will be made by June 1, 1919, and to the international winner within three months.

*The Instructor* announces a series of prizes for best letters of 500 words or less on "Where I would like to go on my vacation this year—and why." The contest is open to all persons professionally identified with schools and colleges, also to students in teacher-training institutions—except that winners of prizes larger than \$10 in previous travel contests of this periodical are not eligible. The first five prizes are \$100, \$75, \$60, \$40, and \$25; there are ten prizes of \$25, 25 of \$10, and 60 of \$5. Closing date, June 10, 1939. For more complete details address W. D. Conklin, travel editor, *The Instructor*, Dansville, N. Y.

The Atlantic & Pacific Tea Company is giving away 15 all-expense trips for two persons to the New York World's Fair in a limerick competing contest ending May 15. Details obtainable from A. & P. food stores.

## TRADE JOURNAL DEPARTMENT

Edited by JOHN T. BARTLETT

*American Business Magazine*, 4660 Ravenswood Ave., Chicago, is in need of a great many pictures. Three dollars to \$10 each will be paid for 8x10 glossy prints with factually correct captions and necessary names and facts correctly spelled. Subjects may cover interior shots of newly equipped offices, showing before-and-after views; unusually well equipped and appointed reception rooms of well-rated companies; candid type shots of presidents at work in private offices of manufacturing companies, rated at a million dollars or over, large insurance companies, or of well-known, well-rated wholesale houses, showing closeups, revealing arrangement of desk, with preference to desks which are modern, well-equipped, with intercommunicating telephone system, dictaphone, dictagraph, etc., unusually beautiful factory grounds with people in them; employees at play, where they are using equipment provided by employers; top executives who have made news; unusual or large installations of office equipment; unusual action shots of business meetings, sales conferences, employee training activities, employee meetings; business landmarks (first shops, etc.), and unusual signs, etc., and unusual characters in business (such as men completing the 50th anniversary on the same job, first employee with the company, oldest salesman in big company, etc.)

*Tea & Coffee Trade Journal*, 79 Wall St., New York, is in the market for 1000-word articles on merchandising coffee, teas, and spices. Payment is promised on acceptance at 1/2 cent a word, photos \$1. Emil Raymond, managing editor, suggests that time will be saved by querying him before undertaking any assignment. Payment on acceptance is new policy of this 38-year-old business magazine.

*Radio Retailing*, 330 W. 42nd St., New York, reports, "We are not at present using lengthy feature articles concerning the operation of individual dealers." W. E. MacDonald is managing editor.



*Gifts & Housewares West*, 1355 Market St., San Francisco, is announced by Osgood Murdock and Phil Battelle, publishers. First issue will appear in June. Payment is promised on acceptance, at 1 to 2 cents a word, for trade activities and retail innovations in gifts, art and housewares.

*Office*, 377 Broadway, New York, uses methods articles of interest to office managers, as well as articles of interest to stores and salesmen selling office machines. Editor is W. G. Singleton. One-half cent a word is paid on publication.

*Bankers' Magazine*, formerly at 465 Main St., Cambridge, Mass., is now located at 185 Madison Ave., New York. Robin E. Doan who replaces Keith F. Warren as managing editor, is in the market for authoritative blank management articles, for which 1/2 cent a word is paid on publication.

*Motor Topics*, 22 E. Twelfth St., Cincinnati, O., has revised its editorial needs to read "Humor, automobile operating economy and photostories, closely knit to interests of car owners." One cent up is paid on publication, with \$2.50 for pictures. N. R. Meyer is editor.

*Barrel & Box & Packages*, Chicago, is now located at 431 S. Dearborn St., instead of 305 W. Wacker Drive. Frank Coyne is the new editor.

*Shoe Repair Service*, 816 Mart Bldg., St. Louis, Mo., Walter J. Eggers, editor, emphasizes the fact that all articles pertaining to shoe repairing by high-grade shoe repair shops, must be illustrated. Length limit is 1000 words. Payment is made on publication at 1/2 cent a word.

*Infants' & Children's Review*, 1170 Broadway, New York, likes its features on retail sales promotion events centering about children's wear merchandising in department stores and specialty shops, kept to 500 to 750 words, according to Mrs. Crete Dahl, editor. Payment for material is made on publication, at 3/4 cent a word.

*Packing & Shipping*, 30 Church St., New York, reports that any articles on packing, loading, handling, distribution, loss and damage in shipping, submitted for publication, must be such as to interest large industrial companies, railroads and other transportation agencies. C. M. Bonnell, Jr., editor, offers 1/2 to 1 cent a word, on publication.

*Shipping Management*, 425 (formerly 404) 4th Ave., New York, pays 1 cent a word, on publication, for feature articles of interest to shippers of leading manufacturing, wholesaling and retailing firms. Earl K. Collins is editor.

*Mail Order Journal*, 62 W. 45th St., New York (formerly located at 381 4th Ave.) pays 1 cent a word, on publication, for case histories, fact stories, about mail-order and direct-mail businesses. "Better query first," advises A. E. Calver, editor.

*Implement Record*, San Francisco, is now located at 1355, instead of 417, Market St.

*Popular Mechanics Magazine*, 200 Ontario St., Chicago, has too much photographic material on hand.

*Attire*, 1113 Venice Blvd., Los Angeles, Calif., has returned all material submitted to it, with the statement that it has been impossible to continue publication of this magazine of the men's wear trade.

Mail addressed to *Beverage Retailer News*, Wisconsin Ave., Milwaukee, Wis., is returned by the post office marked "Left."

*Canadian Paint & Varnish*, 481 University, Toronto, Ont., Canada, reports: "As a general rule, we buy very little material of any kind, as most of our material is prepared by our own staff."

*How To Sell* has removed from 75 E. Wacker Drive to 168 N. Michigan Ave., Chicago.

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One client, Leroy N. Kilman, Buffalo, N.Y. (Univ. of Buffalo professor) sold quality material to *Atlantic Monthly*, *Am. Mercury*, yet knocked out four short-shorts in four days, in between, to meet demands . . . Another client, G. Haines Trimmingham, Long Beach, N.Y., is on the staff of *Liberty Magazine* and received checks from *Detective Fiction Weekly*, *Secret Service* and others, finds time even now to continue writing his newspaper syndicate short-shorts.

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### LATE MARKET-TIP FLASHES

*Win Magazine*, 2 W. 46th St., New York, is suspending publication with the April issue. The publishers write: "The \$5000 in prize money which was announced in the April issue will be paid in full, checks to be in the mail on or about the 5th of May." (This information supplants the item on page 19, which was printed before these late flashes had been received.)

*10-Story Detective*, 67 W. 44th St., New York, is a new member of the Ace Magazines group. Harry Widmer, editor, asks for detective short-stories of 3000 to 5000 words and novelettes of 10,000 to 12,000 words, offering payment of 1/2 cent a word and up on acceptance.

# THE STUDENT WRITER

Each month, in this department, some fundamental phase of story writing will be taken up for discussion. It is distinctly a corner for the beginner—the student. The purpose is to present in clear, concise form, without excess elaboration, the basic rules, or principles, of sound craftsmanship. Taken together, as they accrue month after month, the lessons will constitute a liberal course in short-story writing.

This series began in the September, 1938, issue. Back copies available.

## VIII—SUSPENSE AS A NARRATIVE DEVICE

One brutal fact to which every author might as well become reconciled is this: *No reader wants to read your story.*

The author is in the position of a batter stepping up to the plate with two strikes already called on him. The answer, of course, is to make the reader want to read the story—make him wish to know about the characters and care what happens to them.

What is wrong with the following passage?

*Mary Jones was a girl sixteen years of age. She lived in a white house with green shutters, which stood well back from the road. Her father was a dealer in men's furnishings and had a store on West Eighth Street. Her mother was an invalid, and an aunt who lived with the family did most of the housework. Mary attended high school and liked her teachers. Her closest friend was a girl who lived in the next block and who was named Alicia Smith.*

We hardly need to answer that what is wrong with the passage is its total lack of interest. We do not know Mary Jones, and do not care how old she is, where she lives, what her parents do, or anything concerning her. So far as we are aware, there is no reason why we should care. The passage does nothing to furnish such a reason. It is merely one statement after another—"dull-thud" writing.

Now take a contrasting passage—this time a passage (considerably abridged) from a *Cosmopolitan* story, "Honesty's Policy," by Faith Baldwin:

*Bill stared and beamed. The girl was absurdly beautiful. She had everything. She was also excessively bored. He could see that. She not only looked bored, she acted it. The distance separating them could not disguise from him her remarkable ennui. She yawned; she fidgeted. What she needed, reflected Bill, was a presentable man to guide her about the floor.*

*With ponderous gravity, Bill addressed one of the Lorimer twins . . . "do my eyes deceive me or is that Mrs. Pennington across the room? . . . Who's the girl with her?"*

*Grace looked; Elsie looked; four absolutely similar eyes regarded. They spoke in unison. "Never saw her before," they said.*

*The other two men looked also. "Holy jumping catfish," said one, not very tactfully, "is SHE a menace!"*

*Grace looked away. She remarked casually, "It seems to me that I heard that old Penny Dreadful had a niece or a godchild or something on her hands."*

The difference between the two illustrations is obvious. Why is the first dull and uninteresting, the other sprightly and entertaining? Is it not because Miss Baldwin—recognizing that the reader has no inherent interest in her characters—has deliberately contrived to arouse an interest?

Before telling us who her principal character is,

the author seeks to create in us a desire to know about her. Who is the girl? Why is she so bored? Why does she make not even a polite effort to conceal her boredom?

Note the devices employed to stimulate curiosity.

(1) She emphasizes the girl's beauty. In a gathering of strangers how many times have we asked or been asked, "Who is that pretty girl over there?" Unusual beauty in itself tends to arouse interest.

(2) She employs the viewpoint of a man who is excited by the girl's appearance. We look at her through his eyes, and his interest is contagious. Imagine yourself standing idly watching a group of people. Someone questions: "I wonder who that interesting man can be?" Immediately your attention is centered on the man, and you, too, begin to wonder who he is.

(3) When Bill has created as much interest as possible by his inquiries, still another man is brought in with the excited comment, "Is *she* a menace?"

By this time, having done just about everything possible to overcome reader inertia and make us want to know who the girl is, the author parts with an item of information. The girl is Mrs. Pennington's niece. (Incidentally, additional curiosity is aroused as to why they call Mrs. Pennington "old Penny Dreadful.") Continuing in much the same vein, the author gradually satisfies our curiosity by telling us all about the girl. Her name is Honesty, and she has been brought up to express herself with perfect candor at all times—scorning even such petty deception as concealing her boredom for the sake of politeness.

Bear in mind that these are the facts which the author *wanted* to divulge. She withheld them for only one reason—to make the reader want the information. It would have been easy enough to write:

*Bill was attracted by a very beautiful girl. He learned that she was a niece of Mrs. Pennington, and that her name was Honesty. She had been brought up by her father to act in conformity with her name; therefore she always told the truth and acted just the way she felt.*

The rule, or principle, to be deduced from these examples is this: *Never, if possible, give the reader any item of information without first making him want it.*

Whatever tends to whet the reader's appetite for more is grist for the narrative mill. Plot suspense alone cannot always be relied upon to maintain the interest. It must be kept alive by constantly raising questions, tantalizing the reader, making one answer lead into another question, and so on.

Another example—from "The Nutmeg Tree" by Margery Sharp:

*Here Julia paused. Beneath the agreeable surface of her thought stirred the consciousness of something lacking. What was it? She was very comfortable, she had ceased to worry about Susan, yet that wasn't enough. She wanted something more. What was it?*

"Oh course!" thought Julia, surprised at her own obtuseness.

There ought to be a man there. There ought to be a man to enjoy her white frock, to admire her sensibility when she pointed out the jasmine. It wasn't because she, Julia, couldn't do without one. She didn't want a man personally, but because in that lovely place—with its roses and terraces and no doubt lots of little hidden nooks—the lack of one seemed such a waste.

At that moment, a man appeared.

From "The Brave Soldier and the Wicked Sorcerer," by Walter Duranty. (In "Babies Without Tails," Modern Age Books.)

Life smiled, it seemed, for the young couple, as they wandered in the melting snow of the village street happy as if the flowers of summer were already bright on the fields. But alas, in that Eden a serpent lurked. One morning Marfa was sad and downcast when Peter greeted her.

"What's wrong?" he cried.

She shook her head and would not speak.

At length, as they sat hand in hand beside the river, she told him in gasping phrases, with round, tearful eyes. The Khaldoon had summoned her the night before; the Khaldoon, that survival of the past in many a Russian village—wizard, sorcerer, master of spells and potions, suspect of commerce with the powers of darkness.

"There are evil spirits leagued against your marriage," he had said. . . . "Unless you accept my aid your baby will be hairy all over and have a long black tail."

Even in the briefest passages, the device lends spice to the narrative. The information could be given flatly, but it is more effective if it answers a question.

From "Next to Reading Matter," by O. Henry:

"Have you ever heard of Otatama?" he asked.

"Possibly," I answered. "I seem to recall a toe dancer—or a suburban addition—or was it a perfume?—of some such name."

"It is a town," said Judson Tate, "on the coast of a foreign country . . ."

An even briefer example:

The view from the rear window was like nothing else in the world. It revealed the whole range and extent of the Murphey's wardrobe, as displayed on the sagging clothes line.

The uses of the device are innumerable. Let us say that we wish to tell the reader of a certain character idiosyncrasy. Our first impulse is to say what it is, and let it go at that. But remembering that the information will be much more effective if we have made the reader ask for it, we go about it this way:

Overton was a pleasant fellow, but he had one peculiar habit which annoyed his friends. Many of them had taken him to task for it, and he cheerfully acknowledged that it was a very grievous fault, that should be mended. But when they persisted, with the demand, "Well, then, why don't you mend it?" he blandly ignored the question, or evaded it with some such silly remark as "Well, you know I've often wondered about that myself." It was most exasperating.

Since creating suspense does emphasize and make more effective the fact to be conveyed, the device should, of course, be used with discretion. An artist knows better than to highlight every detail of his picture. If we have developed a minor mystery about some fact, we must be prepared with an answer which seems worth the build-up.

Tricks of narrative suspense are especially useful at the story beginning, before the plot has developed sufficiently to insure holding the reader's interest by suspense arising from the main problem. Employed as a

beginning, narrative suspense is sometimes known as an "interest hook." Thus, in the opening of "The Road to Jericho," by Elmer Davis, (*Colliers*):

The man at the wheel kept his eyes on the roadway unrolling in the light of his headlamps; but Janice Blair, huddled beside him, was looking at the faint-lit speedometer that oscillated around fifty, at the clock that said ten minutes past eleven.

"How far is it now, Don?" she asked.

"Twenty miles or so . . . Getting worried?"

"Of course. Jeff's train gets in at 11:38 . . ."

"Where are you supposed to be?" he asked her.

"Over in Great Neck, at the movies. He'd know I ought to have been back from there before eleven."

First we are made to wonder why the man and girl are in a hurry; then why she seems worried about the distance and the time. The answer to this question leads to a more intense degree of suspense, directly involved in the main problem. We are more than curious now; we are worried at the realization that the couple are evidently doing something clandestine, and are in imminent danger of being found out.

Ad writers use this powerful narrative device to the limit. Never do they start out by telling us that the distressed lady in the illustration has B. O. Not a bit of it—for they know we wouldn't care. They tell us she has been often a bridesmaid but never a bride; they tell of the men who were attracted but never called a second time; they arouse us to a very fury of desire to know what mysterious thing about the lady repels all comers. When the suspense has been sustained to the limit, then—and not until then—they give us the answer.

The ad writers no doubt learned the trick from fiction writers, but there is nothing to prevent fiction writers from learning it back from them.

Almost every important or incidental fact can be given as the answer to a question. The story which keeps the reader asking: "Who is it?" "Why did he do that?" "What will be the outcome of this?" is the story which holds that reader to the end.

## PRACTICE SUGGESTIONS

1. Read various published stories and mark the passages in which narrative suspense has been used—that is, passages in which information has been given after the reader's desire for it has first been awakened.

2. Rewrite several such passages, merely giving the information, without first arousing the reader's curiosity. Which development is the most interesting?

3. Rewrite the passage about Mary Jones at the beginning of this lesson so as to arouse in the reader a desire for the items of information given, before they are disclosed.

4. Devise a variety of ways by which the reader's curiosity would be briefly aroused as preparation for such items of information as the following:

The heroine has an aversion to young men.

The boy has failed in his examinations.

The time is half past two.

Jake is a gunman.

Mr. Jones carries a dollar watch.

Susan is to be married within a month.

5. Go through several of your unpublished stories, and note whether you find any passages of "dull-thud" writing—in which information is disclosed through flat-footed statements which force it down the reader's throat. See if you can rewrite them so as to make the reader want the information before it is given. When you have done so, is there a noticeable improvement?

6. Write a story based on a worth-while plot, in which narrative suspense is especially emphasized. See how frequently you can make the reader ask "Why?"

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